

# Founding Marketing Science

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By 1978 the sheer quantity of high level marketing science research had exceeded the space available in the Marketing Department of *Management Science* and the *Journal of Marketing Research*. In addition, JMR was (and is) more oriented to statistical methodology. We envisioned more of an engineering/operations research flavor to any new journal. At one of the TIMS/ORSA meeting Frank Bass and John Little asked me to chair a committee to look into the feasibility of starting a new marketing journal under TIMS/ORSA sponsorship. I agreed to do so. The other members of the committee were Bob Cooper, Joe Dodson, Irv Gross, John Hauser, Mike Rothkopf, Subrata Sen, and Dick Wittink.

## Getting Started

Each member of the committee mailed a questionnaire to 20–40 key marketing professionals in their particular segment. The interest in subscribing to a new journal and writing manuscripts for this journal was very high. Frank and John also investigated potential financial support. At a Joint Council meeting in October 1979 I presented the committee's report. It was well received, so much so that both TIMS and ORSA would give the journal \$10,000 each if we could collect a matching \$20,000. (The new journal would be more TIMS flavored than ORSA. Mike Rothkopf, the TIMS Vice President of Publications, was crucial in obtaining the ORSA support.) The TIMS/ORSA Joint Council suggested that I chair the editor search committee (which was the original committee plus John Little and Dare Hopkins). When I decided to be a candidate I left the committee. Rothkopf replaced me as the chair. I was asked to be the first editor in late 1979 and accepted. On January 3, 1980 there was a three-hour conference call with Rothkopf, Little, Bass, Marty Starr, Gross and me.

Rothkopf and Little agreed to head a "launch team." Bass and Little were in charge of obtaining the matching \$20,000. Through the efforts of Frank, John, and a few others, we convinced Roy Stout at Coca-Cola, Dave Learner at Market Research Corporation of America, and Lew Pringle at BBDO to give \$5,000 each in their companies' names. The final \$5,000 came from John Little and Glen Urban's company, Management Decisions Systems. MDS (and later IRI, which acquired MDS) bought the back cover of *Marketing Science* for advertising from 1982 through 1987. With a launch plan plus the seed money, we were off and running.

## Assembling a Team

My first action was to appoint three area editors: Seenu Srinivasan, Subrata Sen, and Jerry Wind. Together, we constructed an editorial board. Barbara Sorich, my secretary at Columbia University, received some relief from her university duties and became the managing editor. Now all we needed was a name before sending out a formal request for submissions.

## Naming the Journal

No, the journal is not named after our annual conference. (The first conference in 1979 at Stanford and the next three were called the Market Measurement and Analysis Conference.) Seenu, Subrata, Jerry, and Mary DeMelin and her TIMS staff made numerous suggestions. We finally settled on *Marketing Science*. This caused the President of the Board of Governors of the Academy of Marketing Science to write me a letter threatening legal action if we did not change the name of the journal. At least 15 years before the Academy of Marketing Science was formed, Al Kuehn founded Marketing Science Associates, and the Mar-

keting Science Institute was established. I had Al and Alden Clayton, then president of MSI, write to me saying the term “marketing science” was probably in the public domain and that they had no objection to us calling our new journal *Marketing Science*. I forwarded this correspondence to the Academy and have yet to hear back from them.

## Designing the Journal

John DeMelim (Mary’s husband) was a professor in the Rhode Island School of Design. John helped Mary and me design the “four boxes, three with graphics, one with authors” cover that we still have today. (Since each issue has more than three articles, many authors then and now request a graphic—in fact, many were proactive with creative ideas.) The basic cube with the grid on the face is still on the official stationery of the journal. Even though the journal is now in the larger  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  format and the color has changed a few times, the basic design elements have remained to give a unique and instantly recognizable “look.” There has been some talk of eliminating the “cartoons” from the cover (I prefer the term “graphic”). Maybe someday they will disappear and make the cover more “academic.” However, I view the current design as saying that we marketing scientists do serious work, but we have some fun doing it.

## The Manuscripts Arrive

The first manuscripts arrived in the fall of 1980. Over the first 12 months we received about 40. Well, we didn’t really have “enough” manuscripts, but we needed to get the journal out in early 1982. Thus the reader going back to the first couple of issues will find an unusual amount of white space and large margins. By very early in 1982 we had enough accepted and copyedited manuscripts to publish Volume 1, No. 1. The lead article is on BBDO’s New Product Early Warning System (NEWS) by Lew Pringle, Dale Wilson, and Ed Brody. Ed was at BBDO and continued to improve and implement the NEWS

model for clients until his retirement in 2000. You could say that we hit a home run in our first at bat.

The lack of manuscripts was a short-lived phenomenon. We quickly built up a backlog of first-rate manuscripts, which I handed off to Subrata Sen as I moved on to become editor-in-chief of *Management Science*.

## A Tribute to Judi

There are too many people responsible for the journal to even mention them all. But I wish to pay a special tribute to one. Just as *Marketing Science* was starting to receive the first few copyedited accepted manuscripts, the flow stopped. The original technical editor had personal problems and, unknown to me, no copyediting was being done. Judi Larrivee, who was already doing technical editing for the TIMS publications, worked overtime on these neglected and difficult-to-locate manuscripts. We got back on schedule, but only with some Herculean detective work by Judi. Judi was special, as all of you who dealt with her know. I continued working with Judi as editor-in-chief of *Management Science*. Judi passed away at age 43. I still miss her. Judi often told me that the *Marketing Science* authors were her favorites. Evidently, we have more manageable egos and collectively have a better sense of humor than her other authors. Judi served *Marketing Science* in her typical upbeat, yet professional, manner until her untimely death. In this archival history of the journal I want everyone to know how she picked up the pieces from a big mess and kept Volume 1 on track.

## Marketing Science: A Role Model

Not long after *Marketing Science* was launched, I had many discussions with Arie Lewin. Arie’s department within *Management Science* had become “too successful.” Our flagship journal could not accommodate the increasing number of high-quality manuscripts being accepted by Arie. Using *Marketing Science* as an exemplar, Arie founded *Organizational Science*, which is now the leading journal in its field. A similar story

applies for *Information Systems Research* and its founding editor Burt Swanson. (Note: "Information Science" had already been taken by the library people.) One could say that the success of the College on Marketing and our journal have been the major stimuli for the current INFORMS being an umbrella organization of successful miniprofessional societies.

## How Have We Done?

By any reasonable academic standards *Marketing Science* has done well. Many of the articles have become classics on virtually all the reading lists for Ph.D. seminars. Publications in the journal greatly enhance any tenure case. The journal, the college, and our annual conference all help each other. Clearly, *Marketing Science* is a major component of an energetic, international marketing science community.

In spite of the successes with the journal, however, I do believe we have lost something along the way. The connection with industry is not as strong. The articles in the early issues had more of an engineering/operations research/problem-solving flavor. This

had greater appeal to the serious practitioners in industry. Of course, many recent articles and the special issues on empirical generalizations and the Internet are highly relevant to practitioners as well as to academics. The increasingly rich data sets also require more complex modeling and estimation than was the case 20 years ago. Thus, it is probably inevitable that current articles are less reader- and user-friendly. Yet even the (in my opinion) more social science-orientated *Marketing Science* has remained firmly anchored in the real world.

## Final Thoughts

It was fun being involved at the birth of the journal. John Little and Frank Bass are really the fathers of *Marketing Science*. They made it politically and financially feasible for getting the process started. The high standards set at the beginning have been maintained and enhanced by the editors who followed me: Subrata Sen, John Hauser, Rick Staelin, and Brian Ratchford. *Marketing Science*—in both upper and lower case—is doing very well indeed.